

VII. EDUCATION.

97. Encouragement of private enterprise in the fields of Vernacular and English education.

Mr. Paul Daniel M. A., L. T. (Member, Nominated) spoke of the early activities of missionary agencies in Travancore in the field of education and pointed out that the activities of private bodies were bound to continue in the future also, in view of the increasing gravity of the educational problem, to supplement the efforts of Government in that direction. The "aided schools" deserved to be known as "aiding schools", as those schools aided the Government in the discharge of their duty of providing useful instruction. The managers of private schools had begun to feel that their burdens and responsibilities were more than what they could, under the present altered economic conditions, bear as cheerfully as they did before. The system of grants-in-aid, which was of course liberal at the time of its promulgation, was at present utterly inadequate to meet the new conditions created by the war. While the pay of teachers in departmental schools was steadily enhanced from time to time, the rates of grant allowed to private schools remained stationary. The old system was very nearly equal to the proportion obtaining in the Cochin State where the grant to an untrained teacher was As. 14 in the rupee on the total salary. The minimum salary of the departmental school teacher had become practically double of what it was a few years ago, and it was therefore time that the grant-in-aid rates were revised. While the department recognised a difference in status and pay between headmasters and assistant teachers in departmental schools, no such distinction was laid down in the Education Code so far as the rates of grants for those classes of teachers were concerned. That was unfair. The managing bodies had to maintain such distinctions for purposes of discipline and efficiency and they were obliged to incur the additional expenditure incidental to such arrangements without getting any proportionate help from Government. Large bodies engaged in education like the London Missionary Society had to appoint an inspecting staff also. A qualified headmaster of a higher grade vernacular school had to be paid at least Rs. 40 per mensem; but the Code allowed only Rs. 10. Private bodies, therefore, naturally fought shy of higher grade vernacular schools. The Member therefore urged that the additional expenditure on headmasters of schools of either grade as well as the inspecting staff should be recognised by Government and duly provided for.

In regard to English schools, the Member was of opinion that a more liberal system of grant-in-aid was absolutely necessary in the interests of education. The conditions of grant to English schools laid down in the Code, were not conducive to efficiency. There was a strong temptation for the manager to resort to the cheapest expedients such as the employment of untrained teachers to save additional expenditure. The maximum grant did not at present cover even one-half of the deficit in such schools. The annually recurring deficit together with the demand for more pay and the need for the provision of facilities for training and for the establishment of a Provident Fund made the position of private schools an unenviable one. Government alone could relieve the situation and it would be more economical for Government to help to maintain private schools even with considerably increased grants-in-aid than to run departmental institutions. In conclusion, the Member referred to the reasonable recommendations of the Education Expenditure Committee in regard to grants-in-aid, and pressed for very early orders being passed in the matter. In fixing grants for the teachers of vernacular schools, the following points were emphasised by the Member :—

- (1) the headmaster's case should receive special consideration ;
- (2) the inspectors employed by private bodies having a large number of schools under them should be given a grant-in-aid ;
- (3) the grants to teachers under training should be enhanced ; and

(4) a Provident Fund for the teachers of all private schools should be established to which the teachers should be required to contribute one chackram in the rupee and the Government double that amount, thereby freeing the management from a burden which it was unable to bear.

Dewan's reply.—I am very glad to hear from you that the recommendations of the Education Expenditure Committee have met with the approval of the people who are engaged in the profession of education and who possess long educational experience like yourself. An exhaustive consideration of, and a final decision in regard to, the several questions which you have dealt with in your speech must await the decisions on the report of that Committee. As I have said in my opening Address, I am calling for a Conference of educational officers and gentlemen engaged in the teaching profession in non-governmental institutions and also some well known Managers of educational institutions to consider the recommendations of the Committee. This Conference will meet in Trivandrum about the middle of April immediately after the close of the Head Masters' Conference. Meanwhile, as I said this morning, Government have considered the urgency of the relief that is needed in the cases of teachers in vernacular schools and they have passed orders raising their grants roughly by 25 per cent. I may tell you that this by itself means an approximate additional expenditure of a lakh of rupees per annum.

Mr. Daniel.—The Managers and the teachers employed by them are deeply thankful to you for the kind measure of help which you have extended.

98. Educational requirements of Vadasseri.

Mr. A. Nayanar, B. A., B. L. (Member, Municipal Council, Nagercoil) said that the real and urgent need of Vadasseri in the matter of education was a non-missionary vernacular school for girls. He acknowledged with gratitude the existing facilities for the general and industrial education of the boys of Vadasseri, but he deplored the absence of similar facilities for Hindu girls. The two local girls' schools conducted by the London Missionary Society did not command the confidence of Hindu parents whose traditions and sentiments were opposed to the instruction imparted in those schools. The teaching of the Bible and of texts containing biblical stories did not meet with the approval of the general Hindu public. He, therefore, prayed for a departmental lower grade vernacular school for girls being opened at Vadasseri or for substantial help being accorded to the local public, should they come forward to open such a school.

Dewan's reply.—The matter will be referred to the Director of Public Instruction for remarks.

99. Necessity for promoting the Malayalam language and literature.

Mr. Trivikramar Vasudevar (Member, Jenmi, Padmabhapuram Division) suggested the following measures for promoting the development of the Malayalam language and its literature:—

(1) The Dewan's Address to the Popular Assembly should be read in Malayalam also.

(2) All official correspondence except with Europeans should be in the vernacular.

(3) The proceedings of the Travancore Legislative Council should be in Malayalam.

(4) Persons not conversant with Malayalam should not be appointed in the public service.

(5) Malayalam should be made the Court language.

(6) The form of correspondence in Malayalam should be the same as that in English. The existing mode of Malayalam correspondence was utterly lacking in form, the result being that it was open to any officer to address any non-official way he chose.